

THE AIMS OF FIANNA Fáil

1. To secure the Unity and Independence of Ireland as a Republic.
2. To restore the Irish Language as the spoken language of the people, and to develop a distinctive national life in accordance with Irish traditions and ideals.
3. To make the resources and wealth of Ireland subservient to the needs and welfare of all the people of Ireland.
4. To make Ireland, as far as possible, economically self-contained and self-sufficing.
5. To establish as many families as practicable on the land.
6. By suitable distribution of power to promote the ruralisation of industries essential to the lives of the people as opposed to their concentration in cities.

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FIANNA Fáil
(REPUBLICAN PARTY)

THE Way to Peace

OUTLINED BY

EAMON DE VALERA



Speech delivered in Dáil Éireann
on 1st and 2nd March, 1934.



PRICE 3d.

FIANNA FAÍL

“To subvert the tyranny of our execrable Government, to break the connection with England, the never-failing source of all our political evils, and to assert the Independence of my country—these were my objects.

“To unite the whole people of Ireland, to abolish the memory of past dissensions—these were my means.”

—*Wolfe Tone*.

THE WAY TO PEACE

Following is the Verbatim Report

OF THE SPEECH OF

EAMON DE VALERA

President of the Executive Council

IN THE

DEBATE ON THE SECOND READING

OF THE

Wearing of Uniforms (Restriction)

Bill, 1934

IN DÁIL ÉIREANN

March 1st and 2nd, 1934

THE WAY TO PEACE

The President: It is extraordinary how Deputies on the opposite benches have not got sense enough to see that they cannot have it both ways. We cannot be in a perfectly peaceful position with ex-Ministers in this State creating a scare and Deputies such as Deputy Mulcahy getting up to tell us how serious the position is. Now, we are in a serious position. There are Deputies on that Front Bench, as there are Ministers on this, who have seen civil war generated in this country and who know that the bitterness which is being created to-day is going, if it is not stopped, to bring about exactly the same situation. I lived through 1922 and I know how, step by step, the very same thing that made civil war inevitable in that period is going on to-day, and Deputies on the opposite benches ought to co-operate with us here, who have lived through the miserable period since, in seeing that it does not eventuate from it. This country is either blessed or cursed with the fact that there are such people on these two benches. It will be blessed with it if their knowledge and experience will save the country from such another civil war.

Mr. Davin: Hear, hear.

The President: It will be cursed with it if the bitterness which was engendered at that time is going to continue now to create another civil war. Yes, we are up against it. This Government was elected into power on a programme which should have appealed to every Irishman, no matter what side he took in the civil war. We tried to get our people to work on the motto of Tone, to put aside the memory of the dissensions of the past and to try to come together, if we were all Irishmen, in a country that was worth saving, a nation that was a grand nation, that we should, as we were ready to die for it, be all ready to live for it and forget the past bitternesses which, God knows, were imposed from outside. Now, what is the position we are in? When we came into office we knew that there were problems against which coercive methods had been used and which they did not solve. We came in here and we said: "We believe that our people are a noble people, that they are a sensible people, that they will recognise fair play, one to another, and that if the Executive takes time, has patience, the good sense of our people, old and young, will finally triumph."

WAY TO PEACE.

For a year we were in office. In that year we were getting more and more peace until there was not, as can be seen if you

look up the records, a period since 1922 in which there was greater peace in the land. We were attacked here in the House and blamed because we were not taking certain measures which those on the opposite benches would have taken if they were in office. They might have been necessary if they were in office. That is a fact; they might have been necessary. We were getting reports, and we knew what the situation in the country was. **We knew that with the removal of the Oath and the passage of time, the peace for which we were looking, and wanting to see, would be established.** The Oath was removed. There was available then to every section of the Irish people an opportunity of going before the electorate and putting their programme, Republican or anything else. They could have their representatives freely elected, owing no allegiance to anybody, to no power under Heaven except the Irish people. And with that there before them it was quite clear that it was only a matter of time until the motives which banded the I.R.A. together would cease to operate and when, instead of having a military organisation with arms at its disposal, arms which were intended originally to fight for the freedom of this country against foreign countries and which never should be used against the people here, these guns would either get rusty or would finally, when the Republican Government was elected and a Republic declared, be surrendered to the representatives of the people.

Patience was all that was required, but human beings approach problems in different ways. Our attitude of patience was nothing but cowardice in the eyes of those who were using force. I believe in patience. I do not believe in combat, which was put as the motto of the National Guard. I believe in persuading the people to do what is right, if you can. I always knew that, if we were forced to it, the Executive had behind it all the resources of the country and, if it had to do it and was forced to do it, it could mobilise all the sensible people in the country to see that order would be kept. But that policy did not recommend itself to the people on the opposite side and we were attacked here for cowardice and weakness and every possible effort was made to force us to adopt a policy which had proved unsuccessful in the hands of our predecessors.

I have no doubt they are very happy to see us in this position, but I can tell them that I foresaw this position when Fianna Fáil was founded, and I did not shirk the responsibility of coming into this position and I am not going to shirk it now. I am not a fool in politics. I have as good experience as anybody on the opposite benches, and I believe I know the Irish people as thoroughly as anybody on the opposite benches. I knew what I was doing. I knew the difficulties that were in front of our Party unless common sense were rapidly going to be supreme, and the gentlemen on the opposite benches, if it is any satisfaction to them to know that we are in this position, they have that satisfaction. But I do want them to know that we have

not simply stumbled into it. Let them have their satisfaction, and it is a poor satisfaction for any Irishman.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH.

Deputy Mulcahy has told you how at Kilmallock and at Limerick freedom of speech was denied to him. I have, through my whole life, at every meeting that there was occasion to do it, asked the people of Ireland not to be tyrannical one towards the other, to give fair-play one to another. When meetings at which I was were occasionally disturbed by interrupters, and when some of the people in the crowd wanted to pitch them out, I have frequently said: "No; let us hear that man's question; let us answer his question," and in 99 cases out of 100 the answering of that question was helpful and not harmful. I do not stand for disorder. I do not stand for interfering with the rights of others, and I make an offer to those on the opposite benches now. If they quit this tomfoolery of blue-shirting, which is provocative here as it was in Belgium and in Holland, and all those other countries on the Continent, and if we cannot get by the ordinary forces of the law, the existing forces of the law, fair-play at political meetings, freedom of speech at political meetings, we will get a joint composite force, a national force, and we will preserve order.

The greatest enemies of this country, whether in 1922 or now, are the people who create disorder, because disorder, where there are guns available, is going to stop, not at fisticuffs, not at blows of knuckle-dusters, or cudgels, but ultimately it is going to lead to more serious bloodshed. Not very long ago I read a dispatch which Mr. Lloyd George sent over here in the summer of 1922, and I read the reply which the Executive of that day made, having Irish interests at heart as I will admit on seeing it. Trying to put off a conflict, they were temporising, when a spark out there in the streets set fire to the powder magazine and we had a civil war in which we were on both sides involved. Do we want that again? Are we going with our eyes open back into a situation like that? I appeal to every decent Irishman, to every Deputy here, to everyone through the country not to play the game of the enemies of our country by allowing that to happen.

WHY SEVENTEENTH AMENDMENT WAS ENFORCED.

We have come in here with responsibilities. We hate, I hate, everything that tastes of coercion; I hate it from the bottom of my heart. We brought into operation the Seventeenth Amendment. We did it because I did not want to see bloodshed in the streets of Dublin, and I gave that as the principal reason, as it was. That was the immediate reason for bringing down that Act and, having it down and seeing the situation as it was, and sincerely wishing to put it aside, we have been unable to do so because of the fact that we are only seven or

eight years removed from that civil war and the bitterness of that period is still in the hearts of many, and it does not require much to set fire to the powder magazine again.

We are bringing in this Bill with reluctance. We want, as a first step in securing order, to prevent the provocation of disorder. We were accused here the other day of establishing a Party propaganda bureau. We were accused of doing that by the very Deputy who himself made an excellent speech at the time he, on a previous occasion, brought a similar proposal forward. We were accused by him although he knew what we were doing has been done in practically every country in the world. We are accused of bringing in this Bill as an attack on political opponents; we are accused by people who know full well that the problem we have to deal with here is not confined to our country. The difference is that here it would be much more dangerous and terrible and menacing if it got under way than it would be in any of these countries to which reference was made by the Minister for Justice. Deputy Mulcahy would have you believe that in Belgium the reason for the introduction of the law was to prevent a foreign organisation coming into Belgium. Nothing of the kind. It was brought into Belgium to prevent a conflict between the Greenshirts and the Blueshirts. The Blueshirts were a Socialist organisation. They had been peacefully in existence for a long time but the advent of the Greenshirts and the danger of clashes between the two made it necessary for the Government of Belgium to bring in a Bill to ban all uniforms. This Bill is not merely to ban the uniform of the Blueshirts, as those on the opposite benches would have you believe. **It is to ban the wearing of uniforms as a political distinctive mark by any political party.**

Deputies: Hear, hear!

DANGER OF DICTATORSHIP.

The President: I know that Deputies profess to have nothing but the most peaceful intentions with regard to that uniform, but we cannot afford to take the peaceful expressions or the peaceful intentions as expressed by Deputies as a sufficient safeguard for this country. Deputy Cosgrave appeals to his record, and asks would he be associated with any movement that might tend to overthrow political institutions or to establish a dictatorship here. I might say something which I do not want to say if I suggested that Deputy Cosgrave's assurances would not be enough to save such a situation. I think I saw somewhere that Deputy MacDermot said a dictatorship would be established in this country only over his dead body. Again I say we do not want to see Deputy MacDermot's dead body, nor do we think his dead body would be a sufficient safeguard against the establishment of a dictatorship. I tell both of those gentlemen that if this explosion which is possible should take place, or, if I were to use a similar simile, if that storm should arise, they would be only corks on an angry sea. We are not going, with

our responsibility, simply to desist because we get assurances of this kind. The fact is that those assurances are not believed by a large section of the people. The fact is that statements such as those made here by the ex-Attorney-General, Deputy Costello, are not believed by the people. What they believe is that just as the wearing of shirts was but the preliminary in other countries to the establishment of a dictatorship, so here the wearing of shirts helps the banding together of people who could measure their strength, as the Belgian Minister put it, and see what are their chances of success by violence when the time arises. The headline and example of what happened in those countries is before our people's eyes, and it does not matter how you may say that that movement has no sinister purpose, it is not going to be believed by the people. Just as Deputy MacDermot said that a dictatorship would be established here only over his dead body, so there are in this country, a large number of people, much larger, perhaps, than Deputy MacDermot imagines, who would say too of themselves that it is only over their dead bodies a dictatorship would be established, and who, therefore, would be tempted to attack by force those whom they suspected, rightly or wrongly, of having the intention of establishing such a dictatorship.

PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY.

Now I believe in liberty. I believe in liberty for the individual. I believe in democratic liberty. I believe that as human beings we are not to be dedicated to some idol of the State, but that the State should be organised for the benefit of the individual.

Deputies: Hear, hear!

The President: Those are the principles of liberty which are very dear to the hearts of Irishmen. There are Irishmen in this country—and I am one of them—who will die as readily as Deputy MacDermot would rather than see without resistance something established here which is going to deprive us of every right that we thought valuable. You are complaining on the opposite benches because we are introducing something here that is going to limit your liberty. What liberty would there be if there was established here that type of Fascism which it is suspected you intend to establish here? Do you think you would stop at simply preventing the wearing of badges of political organisations that might give rise to trouble on the streets? You would not. Countries where uniforms are forbidden have been mentioned. I will repeat some of them. You have Switzerland, the country, perhaps, of all others which has the most democratic organisation; you have Holland; you have Sweden; you have Norway; you have new countries like Latvia and you have Roumania; but you have also, I would point out to you, Italy and Germany. **Those who are opposing the bringing in of this measure know in their hearts**

that if that which is feared, and which a large section of the people are opposed to, took place in this country, you would have none of that liberty which you are claiming for yourselves, and which you say we are denying you by measures of this kind. You would not then be allowed to write in your papers and speak of a gangster Government, nor would you be allowed to speak of the head of the Government as being responsible for having bombers in Dundalk. You can now say those things, although there are many of the Irish people outraged that you can say them. You can oppose the efforts of the Government elected by the majority of the Irish people to carry out its programme. You can oppose it now, but I should like to see the person who would try to oppose any programme that was going to be put forward by the substitute that you want, or at least that you are suspected of wanting.

Mr. MacDermot: Very different.

The President: I agree it is very different, but it is not very different when we have nothing to prove that we can accept the assurances of Deputy MacDermot or Deputy Cosgrave. Deputy Cosgrave is moved aside by General O'Duffy. I have listened to expressions from the opposite benches which make it quite clear to me that they would have none of the irresponsibilities which General O'Duffy has been guilty of on platforms, but they are not able to restrain him. You think when he has organised his League of Youth and when he has regimented them that you will be able to restrain him. Well, we have a solemn duty to our people to see that he will not get by force into a position to deny our people the liberties which are their right. He can go before the Irish people. If he has a programme he can get from the Irish people recognition and approval for that programme, and if he becomes a Government he can come over here. I can promise that if he does there will be far less liberty in this country than the liberty which it is enjoying to-day. He has that way of doing it, and because he has that way of doing it—as it was done in the past, as Cumann na nGaedheal were doing it—he has no reason to complain. He should not have to be dependent upon the glamour of blue shirts or the Roman salute in order to get him the support that would be necessary for him. I do not want to be misunderstood. I have no fault to find with the colour blue, none whatever. As a matter of fact, I like the colour blue and the Minister for Defence and myself showed our liking for it by choosing it as the colour for the dress uniform of the cavalry section of the Army at the time of the Eucharistic Congress. We have no objection to blue. It has, as Deputy Cosgrave said, roots in the traditional past and we have no fault whatever to find with it. I should like, however, at this stage, to say just one little word about it.

POLITICS AND RELIGION.

A few days ago, I saw an account of a meeting down in Limerick at which Lord Muskerry was speaking. Speaking, as

I remember, to the labourers of Limerick, he appealed to them in these terms:

“We have to choose to-day whether you will join our Party and endeavour to follow in the footsteps of St. Patrick or whether you will go over to Fianna Fáil and become an advocate of their thinly-disguised policy of Communism, class hatred and destruction which they are preaching in a camouflaged form.”

General Mulcahy: He went very near it.

Mr. Davin: Comrade Muskerry!

The President: He went very near it. Is there anybody here in this country who can accuse me of preaching class hatred? When Deputies on the opposite benches were indulging in it, I was not. I have never preached class hatred in this country. The reason I quote this is with reference to St. Patrick. If there is anything more contemptible than another, more disgusting than another, it is for people in any political Party in this country to try to drag in religion to help them.

Mr. Fitzgerald: Hear, hear!

The President: The majority of us here in this country are of the same religion, and if any of us love that religion and love that Church, we will not seek to drag it into Party politics here.

Mr. Fitzgerald: It is about time you said it.

The President: I am saying it. I have always held it and have always said it and I have never attempted to do what is being done from the benches opposite. Every Irishman and every Catholic knows full well that it would be a bad day for the Church and a bad day for religion that it identified itself with political Parties. It has a mission; it has a duty, far above politics. Politicians are up to-day and they are down to-morrow. The dictator of to-day is the exile of to-morrow, and those who love religion and love the Church and want it always to be in a position in which it will be able to be above politics and able to deal with and speak to all its children with an authority that will be unsullied because it is known and appreciated to be non-partisan will deprecate the attempt that is being made here by Lord Muskerry, following others, to associate the Blueshirts with St. Patrick.

We are accused of Communism, and Deputy Mulcahy says that it is near the mark. He is far more of a Communist than I am and he knows it. I have never stood for Communism in any form. I loathe and detest it as leading to the same sort of thing that I loathe and detest in the type of State that General O'Duffy would set up, because they are both destructive of human liberty. Communism is antagonistic, as everybody who understands it feels, to that individuality of soul which every one of us was given by the Creator. I am not in favour of Communism. I do not believe in it either as a social policy or an economic policy, or any other, and I defy anybody in this

country to show that at any time I have supported, or in any way trafficked in it. The Deputies yonder, in the same type of despicable work they are at to-day, when they try to associate us with it, went out on a campaign through the country and they went to the religious authorities and told them the danger that was threatening of Communism. They did that at a time when their own private reports from their police officers let them know that there was no immediate danger or menace of Communism. I asked for reports about Communism when I came into office and I got them from the former Commissioner of Police, General O'Duffy, who talks so much about it now, and he knows it is false. I have that report here. It was, I think, he said himself, a report of fifty pages. It was a lengthy report, anyhow, and I got it summarised.

Mr. Fitzgerald: On a point of order, I suppose this report will be made available to Members of this House?

The President: I am going to give a summary—a statement with regard to counties—and the report, if necessary, can be put on the Table of the House.

Mr. Davin: For Comrade Fitzgerald and Comrade Muskerri.

Mr. Fitzgerald: Class hatred as usual.

REPORTS ON COMMUNISM.

The President: I have got here reports which, as I have said, are a summary of that report which was got at my request from all the superintendents of the Guards throughout the country. Here is what the report reveals. Cork is a city of some industries where you might have expected if there was much Communism about to find some traces of it. And this is an extract from the report put here in the summary prepared for me:—

“There does not appear to be any definite effort to bring Communistic influence to bear on the unemployed as at present organised, for there is no distinct organisation of unemployed under Communistic auspices.”

There is no Communism then in Cork and this was the position as at November 10th, 1932—no organised Communism in Cork.

In Carlow-Kildare, similarly, there is no organised Communism. The Carlow report says:—“There are no Communistic organisations in this county.” The same statement is made with regard to Kildare.

In Monaghan-Cavan the report is similarly “no.”

In Clare the report states:—“About 20 members of the Kilrush branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union belong to the I.R.A.; about 50 more support that organisation, and their outlook could be said to be more Communistic than national.” Reference is made to “a Communistic cell recently formed in Kilrush by Mr. T. J. Ryan, local organiser

and Commandant of the West Clare Battalion, I.R.A.” That is Clare. “In Kilrush there are about 20 members of the Kilrush branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union belonging to the I.R.A. and about 50 supporters of that organisation.” I do not know what the position in Clare is to-day. I know that there was at that time a labour dispute and that there were difficulties in Kilrush, but I take it for what it is worth.

In Donegal two men are mentioned, one whose activities have been referred to in previous confidential reports. He gave out Russian periodicals weekly, distributing them to the local people. It is believed that he advocated Communism, but so far his activities have been confined to the locality in which he resides. In August this man was visited by a Russian lady and a few days later left. That is the position as given by the report from Donegal.

In Galway, the report does not disclose the existence of any Communistic organisation, and Galway was going to be the centre of a great Communistic Convention and I will tell you how beautifully this educator of youth is able to turn it on at a United Ireland Party Convention. In Galway there is no Communism.

In Kerry it is stated “no Socialistic or Communistic agents have so far existed or become active in the division.” In Leix-Offaly there is nothing to show that any Communistic organisation exists though the report refers to attempts from Communists outside the division to bring some of the unemployed into their ranks. “Generally speaking,” the report says, “Communism has got little or no hold in this division.”

In Limerick, it is stated, that there was a failure to form a branch of the Workers' Union of Ireland and the report states “the president of the City Workers' Union is stated to be of a Communistic mind.” But he appears to be the only Communist agent they discovered in Limerick. Now I am reading this for the House because I want the people of this country to realise how they are being humbugged.

Mr. Dillon: The President will publish the full report?

The President: The full report will be laid on the Table of the House for Deputies to read. We next come to Louth-Meath. There is no evidence of any Communistic organisation in this division or the association of anyone here with such an organisation elsewhere. That is for Deputy Coburn. There is no report of Communism in his constituency.

Mr. Coburn: He is your best friend there, if you only knew it.

The President: “In Longford-Westmeath there is nothing to report to indicate the existence of any Communistic organisa-

tion. A meeting was held in Longford in October, 1932, at which a certain person was expected to speak. He did not turn up. Scarcely anybody attended the meeting." In Mayo there is no sign of Communistic tendencies. Roscommon: "There is no reason to believe that the unemployed of this county are allied to an organisation with a Communistic outlook." Sligo-Leitrim, two persons are referred to.

We have rather a long extract here about these two persons. One of them has been deported since. Tipperary; no evidence is given of the existence of any Communistic organisation. Several individuals are mentioned in the report who are said to have Communistic views. In some instances leaders of the branches of the Able-bodied Unemployed Men's Organisation are described as Communists, but it is not stated that they are engaged in open propaganda. Some of them were involved in the seizure of Cleve's Creameries in 1922.

In Waterford-Kilkenny the report states that a certain person, one of the leaders of the Able-Bodied Unemployed Men's Organisation, is in touch with the leaders of Communism in Dublin but that he has not disclosed his Communistic doctrine to the rank and file of the Able-bodied Unemployed Men's Organisation. That is Waterford-Kilkenny. There is, however, a further portion of the report, and it says that a certain person is stated to have visited Russia two years ago and to have brought back a quantity of Soviet literature. The Irish Mines and Quarries Union at Castlecomer is stated to be controlled by this man. There are no further particulars given of this organisation. It may be presumed that this refers to the branch at Castlecomer. Wexford: "Several persons are named as holding Communistic views, but it is not suggested that there is any Communistic organisation in the county." Dublin-Wicklow, not including Dublin: "Communistic agitators have not made their appearance." In Dunlavin the non-existence of Communistic activities is reported. But a number of men locally unattached to any organisation may, it is stated, have tendencies in a Communistic direction. "The Finglas Branch of the Able-bodied Unemployed Men's Organisation apparently savours of Communistic ideas, but they have given no trouble so far." Dublin City. Now perhaps I had better read just this: "The Workers' Revolutionary Party and the Communistic Organisation has its headquarters in Dublin. It is stated that approximately there are 400 members in the Dublin district, several of the moving spirits of the Association are Englishmen and Scotsmen. Another Communistic organisation is the Union of the Dublin Unemployed Workers' Movement which at the date of the report had rooms in North Great George's Street." The Workers' College is then described. I think there was talk some time ago about this Workers' College. It was closed in June last for want of students, and it was the only Communist College that existed in Dublin.

IRELAND ANTI-COMMUNIST.

I have gone over the reports made by the officer in charge giving information to the Government of Communist activities throughout the country. **We have got those reports and watched them day by day and under our eyes, whatever tendency to Communism was there, was fading away.** It was fading away because the one thing that might give it life was anything which could be regarded as an attack upon the freedom of the workers. This country is not a natural breeding ground for Communism and everybody knows it. It is opposed to our religion; it is opposed to our individualistic tendencies; it is opposed to our whole scheme of life. If there is one country in the world more than another which is unsuitable soil for Communism it is this. It was raised as a bogey by the gentlemen on the opposite benches in order to give them an excuse at one time for the Bills which they introduced and they are continuing to use it to-day as an excuse for their Blueshirts. An excuse must be given for them. One excuse is that they have to preserve order. It is extraordinary how this community of ideas travels across the water. In Belgium protection was also given as an excuse. **The proper people to protect the rights of the citizens are the organised servants of the State and the State will have to procure sufficient to keep order.** As I have said already, if Deputies on the opposite benches want to work for order they will find us more than willing to supply all the means that may be necessary, and if the ordinary forces of the State are not sufficient to secure order, I say our two organisations together can secure it; but they must be controlled and directed by the proper responsible authorities. There must be no usurpation whatever of police functions by unauthorised persons or by people who want to use that as an excuse for building up a political army.

PROVOKING DISORDER.

I have dealt with two of the excuses. One of the excuses is the keeping of order. As a matter of fact, they know that it provokes disorder. They have complained that their people suffer. We have got complaints that our people suffer. If somebody loses a coin in the street and starts to look for it a large number of people will immediately collect around him through pure curiosity. When political meetings are held people go to them. Unfortunately opponents go as well as supporters and it is a very difficult task indeed to get opponents of a political policy to keep quiet when they hear things that are distasteful and hurtful to them. We have had scenes provoked here in this House where at least we ought to be able to control ourselves somewhat. We have had scenes provoked in this House by references one to another and to things that we do not agree upon. Something hurtful is said. The person saying it may believe it to be true, but there is an immediate response from those who do not agree. We all have common sense enough

to know that with the limited human intelligence we have, unable to see truth as a whole, each one of us only able to see a narrow facet of it, we are not able to agree about certain things and we will not view these things in the same way. The trouble about it all is that very often the more sincere we are and the more certain we are that we have got the whole truth the more intolerant we become, and the more desperate sometimes we become, if our conception of the truth is assailed. If Deputies in an Assembly like this, used to each other's remarks—our skins by this time ought to have been very well tanned—become excited when there is some perversion of what they regard as the truth, is it not obvious, that when people who have not our experience, who have not got the training we should have got in self-control, go to meetings as opponents and hear things said which they believe are——

Mr. MacDermot: The kind of interruption we complain of is not at all what the President is suggesting. The interrupters who come to our meetings start interfering before we begin to speak at all.

The President: I am quite willing to concede to the Deputy that, unfortunately, that sort of thing does happen. Deputies know that on more than one occasion I have had to face people who did not agree with me.

A Deputy: Ballinamore.

The President: I have had to put up with interruptions. I know that that is exasperating, that it offends every conception of fair play. But we are living in a world of human beings, unfortunately, and not in a world of angels.

Mr. MacDermot: It is not done at your meetings.

The President: Let us take that fact into account and try, so far as we possibly can, to approximate to the ideal which we think is right. We are willing to do that. As I said at the beginning, I detest it from my heart. I think it is tyrannical and unfair. It offends every feeling of mine to see any interruptions of this kind. When I say interruptions, I mean the kind of interruptions that Deputy MacDermot has been speaking about, those deliberate interruptions, as if there is anything good or right in a policy you are going to kill it by shouting it down. If the policy is right, it is going to triumph in spite of you, and if it is wrong, you give it a sort of artificial life which it would not have otherwise. There is nothing more stupid, or more insane, than the attempt to combat political opinions and political policies by interruptions. If I had my way, and if my will could do it, I would urge people going to public meetings, if they thought there were opinions going to be expressed that would be disagreeable, to make up their minds, as I have often to do here, to stay away. Very often I find the task rather a difficult one.

Mr. O'Leary: We all do.

The President: We all do, I admit, but, in the long run is there not some work that will be of some good to us? If people go to political meetings and want to hear what their opponents say, at the start they should make up their minds that they will hear things which will rile them and exasperate them. If they think they have not sufficient control of themselves, so as to keep quiet, then they should keep away.

General Mulcahy: The Minister for Justice tells them to go there. What does he mean by saying "Keep the accursed crowd out of the Government's way"?

The President: I sincerely say now, as I have said before, that I have often wondered whether this country would not be better off if the whole lot of us, on the benches on both sides, were taken out and put into some foreign island, and made to live together. I have often thought that seriously, when I see what is happening. I am quite willing to go with the Deputies opposite.

General Mulcahy: Surely the Minister for Justice is not going so far.

An Ceann Comhairle: Order!

The President: Deputy Mulcahy is not above reproach either.

General Mulcahy: Probably not.

The President: Not by any means, and was not above reproach when sitting on Ministerial benches.

General Mulcahy: I never asked anyone to "keep the accursed crowd out of the way."

The President: If I thought for one moment that it was going to mean an advantage to this country, and if I could prove that to myself, I would do it willingly.

Mr. MacDermot: Will you take General O'Duffy with you?

The President: If I thought it would save the country, or save it from the kind of craziness which I see he is bringing upon it, I would go.

A Deputy: Deputy MacDermot would be delighted.

The President: Even though Deputy MacDermot might have the satisfaction, and I might have the misery, I would be prepared to do it. That is a fact. Remember that the feelings we have here and the passions we exhibit at times, are right through the country. A couple of days ago I met two deputations. One represented the Army Pensioners' Defence Association. There was a man on one deputation who formerly held high rank as a soldier. A few days later I met another deputa-

tion, and a brother of this man was on it. They had taken opposite sides. We must remember that the division at the time of the civil war has gone down, and has divided families, putting brothers on opposite sides.

Mr. G. O'Sullivan: Who did it?

The President: I am as prepared to face judgment upon that as the Deputy.

Mr. Davin: You will all be judged by the same God, anyway.

The President: I am not asking the House to judge who was right or who was wrong. I am asking the House to take facts into account and to remember that there is right through this country that desperate division of opinion and fierce passions which are ready to be kindled at any moment. Deputies should bear that in mind when they start a dangerous course, such as I can see to be the course that those on the opposite benches are engaged in at present. When I was in the United States I travelled through the Southern States, some 60 years after a civil war had been fought in that country. The position there was not quite the same as here. There were certain territorial divisions which kept them apart. I was entertained to a banquet at a certain city in one of the Southern States. The chairman of the reception committee was a Federal Judge and although 60 years had passed there was the same bitterness in his heart against the "Yankees" as he called them as was in the heart of his father, and in the hearts of those who were active participants in that war. If that can be so where people are separated territorially, how much more is it so in our country? Do we not know that we cannot take risks here that could be taken in other countries? Do we not know that there is a situation here far more dangerous, if it got ahead, than such a situation would be in Belgium, in Holland or in Switzerland? These countries have had no recent civil war. The leaders on opposite sides in these other countries are not relatively young men which, again, is either to the good fortune or eternal misery of this country. We are relatively young. Every member on the opposite benches and on these benches could, if driven to it, be an active participant in a physical conflict to-day. I ask Deputies on the opposite benches not to persist in trying to do this thing.

GOVERNMENT AND STATE SERVANTS.

It has been said that we are a partisan Government. I say that is not true. We came into office in most extraordinary circumstances. I believe you can search the pages of history in vain to get a parallel. We were the defeated side in the Civil War of a few years ago. Then we went to the Irish people with our programme and we were elected by a majority. We came here to take over the State organisation and the State machinery, every single part of which was built up by and composed

of persons very largely who regarded us as deadly enemies until a few years ago. To the eternal credit of our country I say that, and certainly as a justification I am going to admit it, because I think it is right to admit it, as a justification and proof of the professions of those on these benches now, who were formerly on the opposite benches, that these servants of the State took their orders from us. The members of the Army who were opposed to us, and who fought us physically, took their orders from us as the elected Government of the Irish people. The civil servants, many of whom served against us and used their brains and their intelligence to defeat us, being human beings could not help having their bias and their sympathies, but I can say honestly and sincerely, speaking for the Departments with which I am connected, that I have got as good service from these men as I could expect from anybody under any circumstances.

Deputies: Hear, hear!

The President: There is a police force which like the Army was largely recruited from former comrades of the I.R.A.—those who took one side when it divided. They had difficult work to do through the country. They were sent out unarmed and often amongst a hostile people. We can only confess, as far as we are able to know, that these officers have loyally served us. We came into office and we got service. We came in and we got that service because these men realised that we are not a partisan Government. It is said that we have been vindictive. It has been said by supporters of Deputies on the opposite side that we have acted vindictively. I ask Deputies to show me a single example of vindictive action on our side. I move the Adjournment.

The Dáil adjourned at 10.30 p.m. until 10.30 a.m. on Friday, March 2.

THE CHRISTIAN WAY.

Resuming his speech on Friday, The President said: I read out for Deputies last night a summary of detailed accounts of the position of Communism here, as known to the police force. I did that because this immediate threat of Communism is being given as one of the reasons for the need of such a force as the Blueshirts pretend to be. These reports indicate that there is no organised Communism and no danger of Communism known to the police.

Mr. Traynor: On a point of order, is it permissible for a Deputy on the Front Bench opposite to read newspapers in the House?

An Ceann Comhairle: Papers should not be read in the House.

Mr. Dillon: On a point of explanation, may I say that I was just refreshing my memory regarding a Communist article which appeared in the *Poblacht* this week, so that I might maintain a balance between what the President is saying and the fact, as I know it.

An Ceann Comhairle: If the Deputy is consulting a newspaper for the purpose of the debate, he is in order in doing so.

The President: As I have said, these reports revealed that, so far as was known to the police, there was no menace of Communism in any part of the 26 counties with the exception of three places. Dublin was mentioned. Castlecomer was mentioned and Kilrush was mentioned. Dublin, being an industrial centre as well as the capital of the country, might naturally be expected to be the point where there would be the greatest evidence of such a movement if it really existed and where there would be evidence of its activities and strength if it were active and strong. I remind Deputies of some things which are well known to them but which, when they are talking in the country, they choose to forget. At the general election in March, 1932, a Communist candidate contested Dublin City South. Out of a total poll of 55,701, he received 917 votes. Another Communist contested Dublin City North and he received 170 votes out of a total of 71,402. Those who know one of the candidates will agree with me when I say that the major part of his vote was a personal vote and was not a Communist vote. What was the position a year later? That was at the election in 1932—the election on which we came into office. We are supposed to be pampering Communists, to be permitting this evil to exist in our midst without taking action against it. What was the position after one year of our administration? At the general election in January, 1933, not a single Communist candidate was nominated in any part of the country. At the Dublin Municipal election in June, 1933, two Communist candidates received a total of 413 votes out of a total of 83,299. Again, a proportion of those 413 votes were personal to the candidate. What is the use of Deputies on the opposite side going around and pretending

there is such a menace of Communism that it is necessary for the citizens to band themselves together in a private army in order to stop it? Where there are disturbed conditions, where there is social distress and economic distress, there is danger that people who are in want of work and people who are starving will be played upon by people who have certain economic and social theories which, they pretend, will get them out of their difficulties. That danger is here as it is in every country. It is here now and has been here in the past and at all times. The way to meet it is the Christian way—seeing that these people get the means by which they can live. **It is not by going around in blue shirts you will stop Communism. You will stop it much better by putting on the habit of St. Francis—if you want to stop it.**

COMMUNIST DANGER A POLITICAL BOGEY.

Now this thing of Communism was worked up to such a stage in the country that there is a background, for the people on the benches opposite, on which they can stand, and work on the fears of the multitude; and they have never been slow to avail themselves of that. And this gentleman who goes out now and sets himself up as an instructor of youth has not been slow to avail himself of it. He was a police officer and he knew the facts, and he knows the facts. He is the very man who submitted and sent us that report. Some time ago there was a meeting of the United Ireland Party. Deputies will remember there was some talk in the Press of a Communist convention in Galway. Now just think of it. In Galway, where the report was that there was no Communism. That was given as the centre. Galway, if you please, was to be the place where they were to hold a Communistic convention. On the very face of it, it was ridiculous. What was the origin of this talk about the Communistic convention in Galway? It was a circular, of which I have a copy here, which was sent round and posted to some people from an address in America. I do not even think there was an address to it. Now anybody can take that circular and look through it. It is headed "Irish Workers' Republic—Atheist; Birth Control, Civil and Industrial Emancipation Alliance, New York." That is the heading of the circular. You look through it and what do you find? It is the production of some lunatic, some degenerate, perhaps. The same type is frequently found sending round circulars. General O'Duffy, who is a police officer, and who could estimate the full value of that, instead of being frank with the convention, when this matter was raised, worked it up to such a point that there was a resolution put upon the clár of their convention dealing with it.

Now this is a report from the *Irish Times* of what this frank gentleman, who is going to teach honesty to our youth and truth to our youth, says, frankly, facing that convention. Announcing that a series of resolutions protesting against the holding of a Communist congress were being withheld, General O'Duffy explained that the reason was that the congress was not now to

take place. A gentleman named Barry in New York, he said, had fixed a certain day and place for the Communist congress in this country, whether acting in conjunction with the representatives of Communism here, we do not know; but this is the lesson he wanted to produce, especially upon the League of Youth—the Congress has been called off, or postponed, because of protests, especially from the League of Youth. That is the lesson taught by a man who sets himself up as the leader of youth and a teacher of honesty. Heaven knows if there is one thing that we want for our youth, more than anything else, and that we want taught in our schools, it is reverence for truth and honesty.

Mr. G. O'Sullivan : What did the Bishop of Galway say?

The President : The Bishop of Galway in what he said was misled.

Mr. Minch : Was the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin misled?

The President : I have got the facts and I shall be glad to let the Bishop see this circular, and I will show him the report we have got from America that this man cannot be traced. Yes, we do want to have truth and honesty very badly, indeed, to be taught in our country, and I hope the man who will lead the youth of this country will be a man who will be truthful and honest and who will not make use of things like that for his own miserable purposes.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Lands and Fisheries (Mr. O'Grady) : As a matter of personal explanation, may I point out that I was listening to one of those agents misleading the Bishop of Galway.

An Ceann Comhairle : That is not a personal explanation.

The President : Now their filthy propaganda has not stopped at that. The same type of whispering, the same dirty propaganda is going on now as in 1922. I have here in this House on one occasion had to speak on a personal matter. I did it, not that I cared a snap of my fingers about what anybody says about me personally but I am jealous, as long as I occupy this particular position, that my antecedents and my character shall not be attacked. Before they went and soiled the steps of God's Altar; the same campaign in another guise is going on now and I know that in order to get some basis for their Communistic attack upon us they are suggesting that I am of Jewish origin.

Deputies : No, no, not at all.

The President : Go and read the *Cork Examiner*. The proprietor and editor sent me a letter apologising privately and saying that a certain thing was let through without his knowledge, showing what is happening at some of those meetings where this question of Communism is being discussed. There is not, as far as I know, a single drop of Jewish blood in my veins. I am

not one of those who try to attack the Jews or want to make any use of the popular dislike of them. I know that originally they were God's people; that they turned against Him and that the punishment which their turning against God brought upon them made Christ Himself weep. In disclaiming that there is no Jewish blood in me I do not want it to be interpreted as an attack upon the Jews. But as there has been, and even from that bench over there, this dirty innuendo and suggestion carried, as I have said, formally to God's Altar, I say that on both sides of me I come from Catholic stock. My father and mother were married in a Catholic Church, on September 19th, 1881. I was born in October, 1882. I was baptised in a Catholic Church. I was brought up here in a Catholic home. I have lived amongst the Irish people and loved them and loved every blade of grass that grew in this land. I do not care who says, or who tries to pretend that I am not Irish. I say I have been known to be Irish and that I have given everything in me to the Irish nation.

A Spanish vendetta! The word "vendetta" has never been associated with the nation of Spain. I have to apologise to the House for bringing in these personal matters, but I know that they are used, as I said, even to the steps of God's Altar. If you have anything good in your programme, why cannot you put it to the people and win on your merits? If you have not, will you at least be decent enough to stop that type of vile propaganda? Those gentlemen on the opposite benches talk about propaganda! The first time that it was suggested that I had any Jewish connections was when I was a candidate for a position as mathematical teacher in the Technical Schools in Bolton Street. Because I was put in the first place by the Selection Committee, this was used in order to prejudice my chances with the voters. It was used again in America for the same purpose. As I have said, if there is anything decent or good in your programme, put it before the people and stand on it, but do not hope to be depending on that type of stuff to bring victory to you. So much for Communism then.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

I also said last night that we are accused of being a *Party Government*, and I challenge any Deputy in this House to show any example of such partiality, such favouritism, such vindictiveness as Cumann na nGaedheal or Fine Gael, as they call themselves, speakers suggest. Somebody may say General O'Duffy himself. The former Attorney-General, who knows better, suggested that we were breaking a practice which was established and, in fact, suggested that we were breaking the law in regard to the Commissioner of Police. He, of all men, should know, and knows in my opinion, that the person who occupies the position of Commissioner of Police was removable at will by the Executive Council without having assigned a reason. On the occasion on which we were debating the removal of General

O'Duffy the Police Acts were read and it was made quite clear that the Executive Council could remove the Commissioner without assigning a reason. The Commissioner of Police occupies in relation to the Executive a most important and confidential position. It is essential that there should be no smoke-screen, no half-truths, no holding back from the Executive of reports, as regards the state of the country which are necessary for the Executive Council in order to appreciate the general position. I said that we removed General O'Duffy because we had not sufficient confidence in him. That was a perfectly good reason. No other was necessary.

As I said, the position of the Commissioner of Police was left, wisely left, under the Act at the discretion and the will of the Executive Council because, although it is right and good that the Police Commissioner should have independent functions, it is also necessary that there should be only one head and that the people who are ultimately responsible for the peace and order of the country, namely, the Executive Council, should be satisfied that they have in the Chief of Police the best possible instrument for the maintenance of public peace. **If we wanted justification for our action, the attitude of General O'Duffy since he left the police would be a good justification.** He is out of the police force, yet he tells us that he has the same sources of information as he always had. Secret intelligence was obtained by him in the past. He paid for it with State moneys. He got information in his position as head of the police and he tells us that he is using that and using that position still. He has the impertinence and impudence to tell the Guards that he has his eye on them, that they are to be good boys, that he has his personal eye on them. In other words, he is suggesting to the Guards that he may be back again and that he is watching them. He is doing one of the meanest and most contemptible things that the holder of the office could do. After he has left office he is trying to use the information and the position which he held in order to tamper with the loyalty of the Guards to their proper officers. He is supposed to be a police officer or was. We see a report where he tells the women members of the organisation that he leads, that they will have hats with hat-pins and, when required, that they will use them in the proper place—"the most effective place," I think, or some such words as these was the phrase used. That, from this person, who puts himself up as an upholder of law, this person who puts himself up as a teacher of our youth. We are told by the ex-Attorney-General, Deputy Costello, that we made a political appointment. What does he mean? He clearly suggests that we have made a partisan appointment, appointed somebody who is going to work for our Party, who is not going to work for the whole community, who is not going to be impartial in his relations to the whole community. Every appointment by the Executive Council will be, in a sense, called a political appointment. His appointment was a political appointment, but, in the exercise of his office, I hope and feel sure that

he dealt with all the citizens equally; but his appointment was a political appointment just as our Attorney-General's appointment was a political appointment. Our Attorney-General has his own independent functions just as we have here; we have things to do which injure, in their opinion, quite a large number of our supporters; but as long as we are acting as Ministers we ought to act for the whole community and we do so act.

Who is this man that we appointed, this partisan appointment that we made? I have here a few points about the Commissioner of Police and the ranks which he formerly held. I knew that Colonel Broy had assisted the Republican forces from 1919 to 1921. He did not take our side at the time of the Treaty. He was appointed Adjutant of the Air Force in 1922. It is rather strange, if we were making this very objectionable political appointment, that we did not choose somebody outside, as we could have done. We could have appointed to that position anybody outside the police force even, if we thought that by doing so the police work would be better done. We took a police officer though. I should have said that before he went to the Free State police force, Colonel Broy was a man who had experience of the former police force. He had been in the former police force and he was, therefore, a man who was trained from the very bottom up in police work. In May, 1923, he was Secretary of the D.M.P. Division, an office which he held to April, 1925, when he became, in the amalgamated force, Chief Superintendent of the D.M.P. He was Chief Superintendent of the D.M.P. in 1925 and later he became Chief Superintendent of the Dublin Metropolitan Division of the Garda. He held that position up to 1929. In 1929, still with the rank of Chief Superintendent, he was made Commandant of the Depot.

It was this man, who had gone through practically all the principal ranks of the police force, who had been trained in police work from the bottom up—it was this man we put in as Commissioner. And we did it because we wanted that it should not be possible that this charge of partiality and partial administration should be levelled against the Guards. Now, that is the political appointment, and that is the evidence of the vindictiveness and the partiality which this Government have shown. I submit that this Government has, instead, shown a desire for the impartial administration of the law. I ask again, **is there anybody who will give a single example here in the House of vindictive action taken by this Administration against any officers who were here when we came into office?**

General O'Duffy wants to add to the general suspicion. There is no doubt whatever that there are large numbers of people in this country who would not think, and do not think, as I think and as I spoke last night. There is hardly a day passes that I do not get from various parts of the country complaints saying, for example, that Land Commission officers down the country are speaking against the Government and its policy and are using their influence and their public positions to hinder the operations

of the Government, to hinder the Government in the carrying out of the policy of which the people approved. I have heard many complaints that in certain places the Guards are partial and I say that the people are suspicious. It is in this atmosphere of suspicion that this friend of the Guards suggests that he is still getting reports from them and suggests that they must look to him and his success for future reward.

IMPARTIAL ADMINISTRATION.

So far from being guilty of this charge that is levelled at us from the Opposition Benches, we have leant backwards, as the Americans put it, and leant backwards deliberately. We did it deliberately because, not merely had we to be just and fair and sure that we were not partial, that we were fair to all sections of the community, but, under the circumstances, it was necessary that we should avoid as far as possible even the suggestion of being partial, because coming into office, being the first exchange of Government here, it was vital for the future of this country that the idea of continuity of Government and not the idea of a violent revolutionary change with each successive Government should be understood in this country and should be accepted. I again tell the Deputies opposite that our supporters are the majority of the Irish people as was proved. That was proved twice. Even the first time we got a bigger Party vote than any other Party had got at any time in elections since the Treaty. And the majority of the Irish people, seeing this leaning backwards apparent, had begun to coin here a phrase against us, a phrase which was used at the Ard Fhéis in Dublin, that phrase being that our policy was to forgive our enemies and forget our friends. As a matter of fact, the suggestion behind that is not true, but if it is coupled with me and coupled with this Administration we shall not be ashamed of it, because anybody knowing the situation, and looking at it as it is, will understand the reason for it. We have given positions which were directly in our gift. We have given them to the people we consider the best qualified for them, and we have not considered membership of our organisation as a disqualification. And would it not be time to even up things a bit suppose we did? Public positions, and public patronage, as it is called—

Mr. Cosgrave: Is this in order?

Mr. MacDermot: That is just what I was wondering.

The President: What does the Deputy say about it?

Mr. Dillon: Is it relevant?

Mr. MacDermot: I submit, on a point of order, that the only allegations of partisanship which would be relevant to this debate would be partisanship in administration of the law. Nothing has yet been said in the course of this debate by anybody on

any side, as far as I am aware, with regard to the distribution of appointments.

The President: I have not finished yet.

An Ceann Comhairle: The question of partiality was raised in the debate, and the President is in order.

FAIR PLAY ALL ROUND.

The President: I am dealing with the charges that are made against this Administration—the charges that are being used as a reason for the building up of a private army. I have dealt with the charge that we were supporting Communism. I am dealing with the charge that we have been vindictive and partisan; vindictive in our attitude to public offices and partisan in our appointments. I think any person who has any sense of logic at all will understand that it is relevant. I was talking about public patronage, or what is called public patronage. I hate the word, but it is the word that is used in that connection. Public appointments are paid out of the public purse. All sections of the community are entitled to their share in accordance with their merits. For ten years we had an Administration whose policy against a section of the community was revealed in a document that I read some time ago; when certain people were to have a heavy hand upon their lives; when employers were told not to employ them and they were left unemployed when, in accordance with their abilities, they would have been employed if there were no political prejudice against them. For ten long years that policy operated, with the result, as I explained last night, that a large portion of the public services was selected from people who had a certain political outlook. And if there was a bit of evening-up would it not be fair? It would be fair. Just as we are going to keep our contract—at least the State contract—with the military service pensioners, so also do we believe that those who were in a similar position on the other side have an equal title, and that it is justice and fair-play all round. That has been our policy.

This charge of partisanship, this charge of corruption, has no more basis than the charge that we are supporting Communism. Deputy MacDermot suggested that what is important is partisanship in the administration of the law. Yet Deputies from that side, in order to make a case in another direction, themselves pointed out that the majority of the people who are at present in prison are people who are supposed, in one way or another, to be opponents of theirs. Where is the partisanship about that?

RAIDING FOR ARMS.

In pursuance of a policy which we announced here and which, if we were allowed to carry it out, would be the best policy for this country, we said that we were not going to go into private

homes to continue raiding for arms and the rest of it. If raiding for arms could get those arms Deputies on the other benches had ten years to get them; they did not get them. If raiding for arms and going into private homes could do it they could have done it. That policy operated over a period of ten years. Was it not time to try another policy? We told the people frankly that we were trying that policy. It was succeeding before our eyes. We were able to see from the reports which we were receiving that it was succeeding—succeeding so rapidly that some of the Deputies on the opposite benches, for whom the success of that policy would be a reproach, desired us to abandon it although it was clearly being successful, and they are now trying to force us to abandon it. They can do it; they know they can do it. I said at the Ard Fheis that no matter who in this State committed an offence against the law the Executive would be forced to arrest him and that there could be no choosing of persons in it. The Deputies on the other side who are promoting disturbances by their Blueshirt organisation, who are promoting breaches of the law—

Mr. MacDermot : That is not true.

Deputies : Where?

The President : Everywhere.

Mr. O'Leary : Where?

Mr. Bennett : Arrest any man who does.

The President : I am perfectly certain that the Minister for Justice, when he is replying, will be able to give you a number of instances.

Mr. Dillon : And he will cook the outrages on the other side.

The President : My goodness, the outrages on the other side? Those things are happening constantly, if somebody hits you you hit back—

Mr. Dillon : That is the crime we are charged with.

The President : What are you charged with?

Mr. Dillon : That is the crime we are charged with.

The President : What crime are you charged with?

Mr. Dillon : With hitting back when somebody hits us.

The President : No. You are charged and I charge you, with provoking it. Last night I was passing outside, and I heard a Deputy eloquently talking about the morality of defence and attack—aggression and defence. We have the governments of the world trying to settle that question. Where defence ends and aggression begins is a very difficult question, and what Deputies by their organisation of this movement are doing is

creating eternally for us here the problems of disarmament which, internationally, are puzzling the wisest minds of the world. What is the reason for nations arming? Not one of them will say that they are out to attack; every one of them will say that they are arming for security and to preserve their rights. That is the basis also of the Blueshirts—

Mr. MacDermot : We are not arming.

The President : You are, and the Deputy knows it as well as I do.

Mr. MacDermot : We are not arming.

Mr. Brennan : You know that is wrong.

The President : The Deputy knows as well as I do that arms are available if they want them.

Mr. Dillon : Where?

The President : In dumps.

Mr. Dillon : Very well, arrest them.

The President : We are getting them and we will get more.

Mr. Dillon : Arrest every man who has arms and we will support you.

The President : The Deputy has had no experience of this thing at all. He is talking out of the fullness of his ignorance and so is Deputy MacDermot.

Mr. Dillon : That is no answer.

The President : If the Deputy would keep himself quiet for a little bit and behave as he would wish the people at his meetings to behave and let me finish, he will have an opportunity, or somebody on his side will have an opportunity, of making any remarks he chooses.

Mr. Anthony : The President might control his own followers.

NO PRIVATE ARMIES.

The President : With regard to this question of partial administration of the law, so far as the ordinary police work is concerned, the Executive Council does not interfere. The Executive Council does not interfere and should not interfere. The Commissioner of the Guards has certain defined duties and it is his business to carry out these duties impartially and every officer under him the same. In regard to this matter of raiding for arms, there is a big question of public policy involved. I told the House and I told the country what our policy was and, as I have shown, it succeeded admirably for a year, until this very thing that happens between nations began to happen here. Certain people,

feeling like certain nations, that their rights were in danger, began to equip and arm themselves in order to protect those rights. Their neighbours on the other side, seeing this arming going on, say "This is meant to attack us and we have got to arm." Unfortunately, for the world—or fortunately, perhaps—but unfortunately, so far as this disarmament question is concerned, there is no single authority that can impose its will. Thank God, it is here—an authority that can and will insist that this building up of private armies and this arming, whether it be for defence or attack, will not take place.

THE SEEDS OF CIVIL WAR.

Nobody can accuse us of acting hastily but now we are in a situation in which if we do not act, we are going to have, as I have said, day by day the sowing of the seeds of a civil war and we are going to have a very fruitful harvest from it. We are going to stop it in so far as the resources of this community make it possible. We said we are not going to raid for arms but that those who would be found with arms in public places were going to be punished and we said that with all our tolerance, there was one thing that was not going to be tolerated—uniformed parades. In defiance of that and because the Deputies over there said that it was within their legal rights to wear a military uniform, because that is what it amounts to, and because they were using the machinery of the law to defeat and prevent—(*Opposition laughter*)—Yes, the decision on questions of law is sometimes a very difficult affair as those on the opposite benches should know by this time—and they do know it. I have seen the reports which General O'Duffy sent them about the loopholes there were and the difficulties he had in doing certain things and out of the abundance of their knowledge of the difficulties that attach to administration in circumstances like ours and their knowledge of the rents that are in the very things which they themselves devised, they are using the courts to hamper the Executive when it is necessary in the public interest that the Executive should be able to act.

Mr. Dillon : The courts to hamper the Executive! Glory be to God!

The President : Yes; it may be new to the infant mind of the Deputy that it is not the first time in history that the complicated proceedings of courts in determining certain principles—

Mr. Dillon : Were used to protect the people from tyranny.

The President : Yes. The Deputy cannot even now keep quiet—this gentleman, who protests against interruption at his meetings, in the National Parliament is not able to restrain himself in an argument. I am not saying anything offensive to him. My remarks are not of the same type as some of the

speeches that are delivered in the presence of some of our followers down the country by people on the opposite benches. My argument is an argument and not of the type that should rile or excite anybody. Yet this Deputy who expects us to be angels here is not able to keep himself quiet for ten minutes. I know as well as the Deputy knows the importance for the individual citizen in the State of having independent courts to protect his rights and from the benches over there, I tried to make that operative. I said a truth when I was on those benches, that it is very important for the individual citizen in the country that the Executive, which has at its command when it needs them all the resources of the community, should not be in a position to abuse them by taking vindictive action, unfair and unjust action against an individual in the community. That is quite true and there is nobody who respects the operation of the law more than I do and there is nobody who has a keener sense that I of the importance of Ministers and members of the Government and every public official who has to deal with the community as a whole acting fairly and impartially.

NECESSITY FOR PROMPT ACTION.

I know the part which the courts have to play but I know also the duties of the Executive when it is facing a situation such as I see confronting this country, and I say that long and tedious action may tie the hands of the Executive in the matter of taking action at a time when they should take it—before serious developments have taken place—and to use the courts to prevent that action, particularly when that is done by men who understand the need of the Executive for such powers, is an abuse of the courts. Suppose we have long and tedious cases in court, occupying months and months and in the meantime, we have an organisation, such as the one which I have referred to several times here already, growing up, with people becoming more excited as they grow up, we will have marching and if one organisation marches 50 strong to some town, other people will march in 100 strong the next day, and if they come in in green shirts or blue shirts the day after, we are going to have other people in other coloured shirts coming along and endeavouring to show that it is they who have the majority of the people at their back.

It is said that this is directed against the Blueshirts. It is going to operate against any type of uniform of a political character, and I would remind the ex-Attorney-General that when he was making the point that there was nothing political in the other Acts that were quoted I told him there was, that it is against political uniforms in all these countries that these similar Acts have been passed, because it is the political objective they have that makes them dangerous. Unfortunately, human beings have a desire to get power. General O'Duffy knew that when he suggested that those who got in early, who got in as

the Americans say, on the ground floor, would have most of the plums. The glamour of bright uniform, the glamour of marching, is a glamour which has had an effect, fortunately or unfortunately, upon our people. We have been called a martial people. Recent history has made marching more attractive. Do the Deputies want to see two or three armies here attached to political parties, marching about, or would they not be better satisfied to see that the only people to march about in uniform will be the forces under the command of the duly and legitimately elected Government?

Mr. Anthony : Hear, hear.

The President : That is what this Bill is intended to do. One of the first steps necessary to do it is to ban this thing. With all our tolerance we could not permit one thing and that is marching about in uniform. The reasons why we were against it were the reasons apparent to the Belgian Minister when he brought in his Bill. There is the assumption of authority which it gives and the provocation it gives other citizens ; the temptation to violence which it brings with it when these men reckon themselves and compare themselves with their opponents and feel that they are stronger. There is another use which I am told it is being put to here in this country, a still more contemptible and dangerous use, when employers are asking their men, " Why have you not got your blue shirts on ? " These dangers and abuses are attached to it and it is purely something external that ought not to have anything to do with politics. How will Deputy Dillon be hindered if, instead of going about in a blue shirt, he is going about as his father did and other political people throughout the world do when they go to speak to their people ?

Mr. Dillon : May I say a word to the President ? He has mentioned a matter of employers asking their employees " Where is your blue shirt ? " As a matter of fact, one delegate raised that at the Ard Fheis of Fine Gael and every responsible leader at that conference spoke against it and it was unanimously condemned by the conference.

Mr. Lemass : That individual must be the editor of *United Ireland*.

ARMS TO BE COLLECTED.

The President : I want to call the attention of Deputy Dillon to the fact that he should be quiet for a minute or two. I gave way just now. Still more of the toleration. There was no need to do it. I would be within my rights in not giving way. The Deputy of course denies it and his word is going to be taken. We were told that no responsible person on the opposite benches would advocate the non-payment of rates, yet the Government was aware and perfectly satisfied that there was such a campaign

and the Government has had to take very strong action to end that campaign—action that is going to bring considerable hardship on the people who were foolish enough to be led into it. Now to continue about the arms. We have come to the state when the Government will give orders that anywhere arms are got they are to be seized or that anywhere that the police know that arms are likely to be got they are to take them.

Mr. Belton : Why is not that in the Bill ?

The President : There are ample powers for dealing with that in other Acts and I have told you why it was that the Executive did not use these powers. It acted in its highest conception of the public interest in the matter. Public interest and their conception of public interest demands something else now. It has been said that I have never asked young people not to join the I.R.A. I waited until first of all we had cleared the road here so that the objections that were put forward actively could no longer hold. And I waited until there is available for the young Irishman who feels that he ought to pledge himself to his country's defence an opportunity to enter into a force that will be controlled by the elected Government of the Irish people. For a considerable period it has been known that my view is this that the date when arms outside the control of the Executive were needed in this country's interest were gone. I see no use for them whatever. I see manifold danger in them. I said if they are there, they can only be used in a civil war because as long as there is an elected Government that Government will not permit any section of the people to take upon itself the responsibility of external defence. Before any section of the people could take upon itself responsibility for external defence or external attack, as the case may be, it would have first of all either to beat the established forces by revolution and internal war or it would have to come in definitely under the State and be made amenable to the control of the State.

There is no way to-day in which the arms of any section of the people can be used from the point of view of general national defence except under the control of the duly elected Government. Everybody knows it. Nobody who is not a fool can think otherwise. It is obvious, so obvious and patent that the fact itself was sure to sink deeply into the minds of the young people in this country, and it is operating. I say, and I say to any young men who might have doubts that any arms held by the I.R.A. or any other organisation are ever going to be effective again under the circumstances, that they are never going to be effective in the national interests until they are brought under the control of the elected Government. For good or ill for the future in this country, in my opinion, for good, every act of defence of this country and the assertion of this country's rights must be secured by men led by the elected Government of the people.

A PEACE MONUMENT.

It cannot be secured any other way. I say that these arms that are held outside are of no national value and that they are a tremendous danger. If I had my wish, and it is a wish expressed solely in the interests of this nation, I would do with those arms what was suggested years ago to me, I think, by Professor Culverwell, when he was saying that he hoped that the two Christian peoples, the peoples of the Christian religions, north and south, would some day do as the people in South America did when the arms with which they fought each other were used to erect a monument to the Prince of Peace. If I had my way those arms that were used through the country would be handed up. Any of them that are treasured as souvenirs or tokens in the hands of responsible persons might possibly be allowed to be retained under licence. But, if I were asked for another use for them, it is that which I have indicated, which would be the noblest of uses, that a cross, such as the Christ in the Andes, might be put up somewhere in Ireland as a pledge that Irishmen will never again fight each other.

Deputies : Hear, hear.

The President : Would it not be a glorious day for Ireland to see the monstrosity outside Leinster House removed and in its place put up a monument as a pledge that brothers who fought each other in the past would never again be led away to fight each other ?

I have not consulted the Minister for Defence nor the Minister for Finance in this, but the Minister for Defence is organising a new Force. They will require arms for training. What better use could these weapons be put to than to be given to a Force that can really defend the national interests ; that will be there to defend the nation, as the nation was defended from 1919 to 1921 under the control of the elected Government of the people ? It is only in circumstances like these that there can be any success. If the elected Government is not moving fast enough, or if the elected Government is moving too fast, there are political ways and means by which, peacefully, not by combat, but by argument, the people can be persuaded to adopt any policy that they conceive to be in their interests.

We are standing for a certain policy. We believe that it is the best. We mean to go forward with it as fast as the resources of our people will permit. It is our duty to see that our people are not taxed beyond their strength. There is no need, therefore, for any private armies or private arms. **This nation will go forward fifty times as fast on its road to freedom and to prosperity if those arms are no longer retained by private individuals or private groups.** In God's name let them be sent in. I would rather a thousand times to see those arms sent in and dedicated to some purpose, such as I have indicated, than that the police force should have to raid houses and other places, put people

in prison and all the rest of what coercion, as it is called, means—action taken by the Executive with the forces at its command. Those arms are outside. Deputies on the opposite benches know that when the army was demobilised large numbers of individual officers took with them some guns they had from an earlier period, souvenirs and so on of various kinds. There is probably no country in which there is such a large quantity of arms out of control.

We see from the outrages that have taken place recently the danger of all that. I have seen circulars sent out by the I.R.A. and I know that their local officers are not obeying them. I know that some of the people who have guns are using them for private purposes, and we cannot stand that. We cannot have houses fired into. We cannot have people held up. If we are not able to get the arms in the way I have suggested, the noble way, as a tribute to this country and to its peace, then we will have at least to do everything we can to ensure that those arms will not be misused. I warn those who have them that the punishments that are available, if those who have them are found with them, are very severe. If they do not want to find themselves for a considerable time in prison, they will get rid of those arms.

I feel that I, for one, could step out of public life and step out of it with a satisfaction almost as great as the satisfaction I would experience if I saw the hopes of the dead generations completely realised—next to that the highest satisfaction of my life would be to see those arms handed in and given for a purpose such as I have indicated.

Deputies : Hear, hear.

“ CEASE FIRE ” PROPOSALS.

The President : Deputies on the opposite benches can do a considerable amount with their people. **I request every single young man in the country not to be misled into sectional armies.** If he feels that he should dedicate himself to the service of his country in arms, there is a way for doing it. If he is a fit person to bear arms, he can get into the local Volunteer Force. If he wants to take up arms as a profession there is, to a limited extent, a place for him in the regular Army. I appeal to everybody in the country. To anybody who loves this country, to anybody who wants to see this country reach its goal, to anybody who wants to see the sacrifices that have been made in the past fruitful, I would say, “ Have nothing to do with any sectional armies.” I speak as one who has a long experience and I ask him to give in those arms and to disband from any organisation that may appear to be a private army. As an individual I have appealed, and as head of the responsible Government I make the demand, that these arms, which are a danger to the public, and a danger to public peace, would be surrendered, so that they may

be under control. It may be suggested that that is strange coming from me. It is only strange to those who have never tried to know the truth. When the Civil War was ended, when it was obvious that we could not maintain the state which had previously existed, and when I saw that could not be done, I was anxious, at least, that a foundation should be laid by which this country would be able to make some advance. I was not the type, and those who were associated with me were not the types, who felt that if their policy could not prevail no policy should prevail; that the country should be in chaos. **We put to the responsible Executive of that day a series of propositions which had the support of all the forces hostile to it at that time.** We made a proposition that this Assembly should be freed from any political test, and that if that were done these guns, which had been used in the Civil War—these weapons which were out in the country—should be put under responsible control until the election should have decided national policy. These propositions guaranteed that from once the people had decided national policy, and once a Government had been elected as a result of that decision, these weapons should be handed over to that Executive. I say to-day that these conditions have all been fulfilled.

MAJORITY RULE.

We are the Executive to-day. We accept that position. We have made that position. There is no test here. There is no obligation against any citizen, who may represent his fellows, holding any political views he chooses, and getting these political views put forward and accepted. There is freedom in this National Assembly, freedom to take any action the majority wants to take. That being so, we hold that there ought to be no objection on the part of those now controlling arms. On their part they were ready to do it for the previous Executive. We are in office now. We give these terms and accept them. We offered them before. We accept them now as we are here. We ask, in the national interests, having the same aims which inspired the putting forward originally of these proposals, that they be accepted. If they have any doubt, if a Republican Government was elected in a majority, or if they have any doubt that, at the next election, they would get a vote in their favour, that there would be any difficulty about the resources of the State going to them, let them give these guns in and put them under responsible control. If you like we will leave them in neutral ground. But they must be open and above ground for everyone to see, and be under responsible control. We will give them barracks in which they can be stored under a responsible guard and, if, at the next election, they get a majority, they can have these arms, and they will have all the arms available in the country to defend and execute any policy that the people, as representing the majority, may decide upon. That is the way to peace and order. I know that majority rule cannot be proved to have any special moral sanction behind it. I know all the

arguments that can be put up, whether it is this person with a little education is going to count or that person who has had experience, and all the rest. I know every objection that can be made against it. I know that you can qualify actions, of which you must accept as much as you please, just as Deputies on the other side qualified the payment of rates, and said something about those who cannot pay. I objected to that, because one knows and learns—perhaps I did not learn it early enough—that unfortunately the rules by which society works have had to be, by their nature, more or less rough-and-ready rules; that if we want a principle to operate we cannot put in “ifs” and “whens” and “buts”; that we must take majority rule as determining policy, and the only way, and that we will have to be content even when we think and are convinced that it is wrong.

If we modify that we will put ourselves in the position of some Deputies on the opposite side who have suggested that they will obey only the laws they like. We simply cannot do that. If we are going to use majority rule as an alternative to force, there is no other way out of it. We will have to take it. It is the only alternative. We have to take it because it is the only alternative, and that is its justification. We can have long arguments on principles and all the rest of it, but they can be resolved in their own way, perhaps, into certain kinds of arguments, such as were before the courts. **It is a question here of majority rule. I am satisfied it cannot be resolved except in one way, and that is to accept it, whether the verdict at the time is right or wrong.** That is the only way we can move. We cannot have “ifs” or “whens.” I ask the people to accept it in the belief that the alternative is unthinkable; the alternative of fighting each other in order to make our policies predominate.

COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE.

I am afraid I have spoken much longer than I intended, but I feel that the things I have spoken of needed to be referred to. I want to see peace. I want to see the complete independence of this country reached as quickly as possible. I want to see success in the national policy that we have put forward. I want to see this country winning this economic war. Perhaps I may be pardoned if I say a few words about that. Certain people complained—not Deputies on the opposite benches this time—that we are not fighting this war vigorously enough. In other words, that our methods of trying to secure for this country its rights were not spectacular enough. They thought to help us—by breaking Bass. That is not the way to do it. If we are to be helped to win, and to defend the nation adequately against this attack upon it, we must do it, not by spectacular methods, but by reorganising our economic life, so that the pressure being put upon us from outside may not be successful. It is a very difficult task, but there is one thing about it, certainly it is a task that would, in any case, have to be undertaken.

Just the same as we cannot put "ifs," "buts" and "ands" when we talk of the principle of majority, so also we cannot have "ifs" and "buts" when we talk of the right of the elected majority who have been entrusted by the Irish people with the conduct of policy. We ought not to have "ifs" and "buts" about their right to use the resources of the country to save the country, and it is upon us in the first instance. Deputies on the opposite side who were so very emphatic in their approval a few moments ago when I was talking about another section of the community do not seem to be so emphatic in their approval now when it affects themselves, but if we are going to get a demand from one section of the community of loyal obedience and if they are to be told that we are to conduct this in the way that we who are responsible for conducting it shall decide to be the best way in the national interest, so I say to the Deputies on the other side that they ought to patriotically help, too.

Of course I know what the Deputies on the other side are talking about. I know perfectly well the objections that they will raise: that we want them to keep their opinions: not to express their opinions. I do not want to do anything of the kind. I believe that the more some of them go around and talk to our people the more it will consolidate the people in their determination to win out. The whole strategy of the opposite Party has been based upon this: they know that the nation is in a difficult struggle, they know that the Executive has a hard task and they are waiting in the hope that the Executive may not be able to perform its proper functions. It is in that atmosphere that they are helping to build up a private army. Now that is not patriotism.

Mr. Dillon: Do you believe that?

The President: I believe what I say.

Mr. Dillon: God help you.

Mr. O'Leary:] You are the only one that does, I think.

APPEAL FOR LOYALTY.

The President: Again the Deputy has shown how unwise it is for him—whoever else does it—to object to people interrupting a public meeting. I believe what I say. This country wants the loyal assistance of all parties and there is not another country in the world in which it would not be given under those circumstances. We are told that a solicitor down the country wrote up to me asking to have a conference. I have had a long experience of political conferences of one kind or another. There was one successful conference and only one that I have ever had anything to do with. They have been used, every one of them, to misrepresent and to create far more damage than their non-existence would have created. If there is to be co-operation it can be here. If the Deputies want to co-operate let them

give us helpful suggestions if there is anything in this corporative State which they are talking about. Let them work it out in detail and see how it will assist our people. There are things to be done; to develop democratic machinery and to make it available for present-day needs. There are numbers of things to be done. I had the corporative idea examined some time ago in connection with a possible reorganisation of the Seanad and I was not able to get much help out of it because we have not here the basal organisations which would make it possible.

As I said last night, I have no objection whatever to blue. I have no objection to the salute either. When I was travelling in America I remember well seeing, from the observation cars, the workmen on the line as they waved their hands. I had always thought that it was a manly salute, a much better salute than the mere doffing of one's hat, so if people want to use that type of salute I have no objection—not the slightest. I have no objection, therefore, to any ideas of that kind, but what we have objection to, and what this Bill is aimed at, is the branding and the segregating of certain sections of our communities into political groups, drilled and uniformed into private armies. That is what the Bill is for, and I hope and believe that it will soon become law.

APPENDIX.

Cease Fire Proposals

DAIL EIREANN.

(Government of the Republic of Ireland).

PROCLAMATION.

The Government of the Republic, anxious to contribute its share to the movement for peace, and to found it on principles that will give Governmental stability and otherwise prove of value to the nation, hereby proclaims its readiness to negotiate an immediate cessation of hostilities on the basis of the following :

1. That the sovereign rights of this nation are indefeasible and inalienable.

2. That all legitimate governmental authority in Ireland, legislative, executive, and judicial, is derived exclusively from the people of Ireland.

3. That the ultimate court of appeal for deciding disputed questions of national expediency and policy is the people of Ireland—the judgment being by majority vote of the adult citizenry, and the decision to be submitted to, and resistance by violence excluded, not because the decision is necessarily right or just or permanent, but because acceptance of this rule makes for peace, order and unity in national action, and is the democratic alternative to arbitrament by force. Adequate opportunities and facilities must of course be afforded for a full and proper presentation to the Court of all the facts and issues involved, and it must be understood that (1) and (2) are fundamental and non-judicable.

4. That no individual, or class of individuals, who subscribe to these principles of national right, order, and good citizenship can be justly excluded by any political oath, test, or other device, from their proper share and influence in determining national policy, or from the councils and parliament of the nation.

5. That freedom to express political or economic opinions, or to advocate political or economic programmes, freedom to assemble in public meeting, and freedom of the Press are rights of citizenship and of the community which must not be abrogated.

6. That the military forces of the nation are the servants of the nation, and, subject to the foregoing, amenable to the national assembly when freely elected by the people.

We are informed that many in the ranks of our opponents will accept these principles, as we accept them. If that be so, peace can be arranged forthwith.

We hope that this advance will be met in the spirit in which we make it, and that it will be supported by all who love our country and who desire a speedy and just ending to the present national troubles.

As evidence of our own good-will, the Army Command is issuing herewith an Order to all Units to suspend aggressive action—the Order to take effect as soon as may be, but not later than noon Monday, April 30th.

EAMON DE VALERA,
President.

Dublin, April 27th, 1923.

FIANNA FÁIL

“Ireland her own—Ireland her own, and all therein, from the sod to the sky. The soil of Ireland for the people of Ireland, to have and hold from God alone who gave it—to have and to hold to them and their heirs for ever, without suit or service, faith or fealty, rent or render, to any power under Heaven.”

—*Fintan Lalor.*